



## Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

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### Communiqué

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 19 May, 2015

## UNITARIAN SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISTS VOTE FOR PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

*Call for addition of proportional element to Canada's dysfunctional voting system*

OTTAWA – Members of Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) voted yesterday to join a national coalition of democratic reform advocates, and advocate electoral reform – specifically, the addition of an element of proportionality to Canada's federal and provincial voting systems.

"I am pleased to build on our longstanding commitment to democracy and our Fifth Unitarian Principle: that of the right of conscience for all and the use of democracy in society at large," said Margaret Rao, President of CUSJ. "Today, CUSJ's members chose to put that principle into action, and ensure that every Canadian gets a vote that counts – and counts equally. This can only be achieved with a voting system that does not disenfranchise people, one in which the results closely reflect the will of the voters. We do not yet have that today under Canada's winner-take-all voting system."

Members unanimously adopted a resolution which read, in part: "*Be it resolved that Canadians should only live under laws passed or modified by MPs representing a true majority of voters, [...] and that CUSJ advocate for change that would see an element of proportionality added to Canada's federal and provincial voting systems, making election results a more accurate reflection of the popular vote.*"

"Fair Vote Canada is very greatly encouraged that Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) have adopted a resolution that calls for the end of winner-take-all elections and support adding an element of proportionality to Canada's federal and provincial voting systems," said Kelly Carmichael, Executive Director of Fair Vote Canada, a grassroots citizens movement for democratic reform. "The concept of democracy is rooted in social justice. How can we have distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within our society when less than half the electorate have representation in their parliaments?"

"Democracy depends on equality and respecting the will of the majority. Fair Vote Canada welcomes CUSJ to a growing chorus of Canadians advocating to make every vote count," added Carmichael.

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) is a national faith-based organization founded to support Unitarian values through social action. The NGO has joined with other civil society organizations such as Democracy Watch, LeadNow, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, the Council of Canadians, and others on Fair Vote Canada's democratic reform campaign for the 2015 federal election.

- 30 -

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